

LEP BOARD MEETING

Minutes from the meeting held on
13th September 2012 from 15.00 to 16.32
at Granta Park

Board Members Present

Mark Reeve (MR) Acting Chairman
John Bridge OBE (JB)
Cllr Nick Clarke (NC)
Cllr Terry King (TK)
Dr Lynn Morgan (LM)
Allan Arnott (AA)
Cllr Jason Ablewhite
Cllr Tim Bick (TB)
Trevor Ellis (TE)

Apologies

Dr Robert Swann
Cllr Marco Cereste
Prof Sir Richard Friend FRS FREng
Prof Mike Thorne PhD (MT)
Neil Darwin (ND)

Also in attendance

Alex Plant (AP) Board Advisor
Glenn Athey (GA) Interim Executive Director
Laura Welham-Halstead (LWH) Communications and Engagement Lead
Mark Cooper (MC) Skills and Business Growth Lead
Natalie Blaken (NB) Infrastructure and Funding Lead
Jan Pinkerton BIS Local

1. Item 1 - Welcome

MR welcomed Cllr Tim Bick to the Board as the new Local Authority representative.

2. Item 2 – Minutes from the last meeting

The Board approved the previous minutes with no amendments.

3. Item 3 – Progress on recruiting a new Chair

MR provided the Board with a verbal update on the Chair recruitment process to date. After reviewing the expressions of interest, one candidate (Graham Nix) was interviewed by the search committee comprising MR, JB and MT.

Following the interview, some due diligence work was undertaken and positive feedback was received about the candidate's previous work at Marshall Aerospace.

The Board discussed the potential remuneration package and settled upon a level that everyone agreed upon. The Board therefore approved the appointment of Graham Nix subject to the final negotiations being undertaken by MR.

MR

4. Item 4 – Future Shape of the LEP

MR introduced the paper written by GA, and proposed that a fuller discussion should be held once the new Chair was in place. GA

After discussions, the Board agreed that GA should work up further details around the different options and seek to hold a two hour workshop once the new Chair is in place to review the matter further.

TE joined the meeting.

GA was also asked to put together a short explanation of the resources the LEP has available (financial and staffing), the current costs associated with those the resources, how the LEP got to its current shape and what is delivered by the team. GA

5. Item 5 – Funding programme design and awards

The Board discussed the principles put forward within the paper, and agreed that whilst programmes should seek to be at least £250,000 it should be worded differently to make it clear that lower value programmes could be considered, as could part funding of larger programmes.

The option of having a flexible pot was also discussed, and agreed to be a good idea to consider.

NC raised the issue of funding the A14 and requested an agenda item was placed on the next LEP Board agenda to discuss this further. LWH

The Board agreed that with the minor amendment discussed, the Executive Team could proceed to finalise the guidance and start seeking out potential projects to fund, particularly from the private sector, and bring them back to a future Board meeting. GA

6. Item 6 – Ensuring the early success of the Enterprise Zone

AA proposed an amendment to the recommendation in point 10 to read “Board calls for a more detailed paper”. The amendment was agreed, as was the recommendation. LWH

A standing item will be added to all future agendas for an EZ update (5 minutes).

7. Item 7 – Growing Places update

NB introduced the paper, noting that overall the Growing Places Fund negotiations were progressing well on the whole.

The Board had a detailed discussion about the funding for Haverhill Research Park, which is being co-funded by New Anglia LEP. The funding request has changed since the first submission, with the overall infrastructure costs reducing, but other requirements for the remaining funds put forward.

The Board agreed that AP should liaise with Suffolk County Council and NB to look into the options further. This information will then be fed back to the Board electronically for a final decision.

NB noted that the Allia agreement is due to be signed next week, with a priority charge secured as a part of the agreement. MR and AP noted thanks to NB for her work on this matter. AP

The Board discussed funding for Ashwell Business Park and agreed that a ten year payback period was acceptable. NB

- The Board agreed a cut-off date of the end of January 2013 for all GPF agreements to have been completed. NB
- On a separate issue, TB raised a question as to why the Local Authority Chief Executives were not able to see confidential Board papers in advance of the meeting. The Board discussed the issue, in particular non-disclosure agreements and the fact the LEP is a business-led organisation. GA to bring back a paper to a future Board meeting about this issue. GA
- 8. Item 8 – National Innovation Investment Institution**
- AP introduced a suggestion from the Science Innovation and Industry Council (SIIC) reference group to create a funding institution within the LEP area to fund innovation projects that are currently struggling to secure funding – akin to an early 3i.
- The Board supported the recommendation for AP and David Gill to refine the proposal further. AP
- 9. Item 9 – Subgroup news and progress**
- NC and AP left the meeting.
- MR proposed that a written update note regarding progress of all subgroups should be created as a part of the Board packs in the future. The Board agreed. GA
- JB left the meeting.
- 10. Item 10 - AOB**
- 10a – MR provided feedback on the BIS Select Committee hearing he spoke at earlier in the week. The key evidence centred on the requirement for core funding for the LEP. The report is due out next week.
- 10b – LWH provided a verbal update on the Growth Prospectus consultation. A wide range of contacts have been targeted and the consultation closes on 9th October.
- GA noted that LWH had secured a secondee from the Environment Agency to support the analysis of the consultation feedback.
- 10c – A note from the BIS Local meeting was distributed. No further queries.
- 10d – Noted that Alconbury was the new location for all future Board meetings.
- 11. Meeting closed**
- The meeting closed at 4.32pm.